St Mark's Church

Frankford - Philadelphia. Pa

Report
on the
Organ

ST.MARK'S CHURCH
FRANKFORD , PHILADELPHIA. Pa
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R E P O R T on the O R G A N

THE CONSOLE

This appears to be in very good condition as regards the action of the keys and all other mechanical parts that have to be used.

THE ORGAN CHAMBER

The Organ has not been cleaned since 1926. Most of the action, although in working order at the present time needs repair in certain sections in some form or other. From a general inspection of the entire organ chamber it would appear that very little, if anything, could be done to renovate, rebuild or remodel the present existing sections of the Organ which are in the chamber where most of the working parts are. I would say very definitely that no one section could be rebuilt or replaced with new material and other sections left to be done at a later date.

The action in the chamber is knownas electro-pneumatic, with outside pneumatics. The wind Chests are of the old "Slider-action type". The main problem in rebuilding or remodeling is in connection with these old Chests. The wind chests are those parts of the organ upon which the various sets of pipes are placed. Underneath the chest is the action which enables the pipe to speak. When a key is pressed down at the console a contact is made through a wire to a pallet (or valve) underneath the chest. This opening of the valve allows air to pass through the pipe and make it speak. All these pneumatics are like little pouches or bellows which open and close thousands of times during the playing of the organ. Being made of leather they naturally wear through years of use and will continue to do so.

Owing to the fact that all the Chests are of the old "Slider-action type" I very much doubt if any builder would even consider reconditioning or try to make use of them in any form. Even if this were possible the same trouble would occur in years to come and also there would be very little chance of making any necessary changes or alterations to improve the general ensemble of the Organ. The slider chest action through years of wear has become very noisy. This type of action needs more wind pressure to operate and even now there is evidence of an unsteady wind supply when the full organ is used. A great many leaks are present in various sections. These of course could be repaired but would only appear again in the same places or in some place were there is a weakness in the pneumatics.

In my opinion the entire organ action in the chamber should be new, including the action which operates the shades for the Swell and Choir Organs. The Console of course could be used and various sets of pipes which could be examined more carefuuly as regards there usefulness in building up a better specification.

After inspecting the Organ and coming to the above decision which is the only solution to make an instrument really worthwhile, I had a talk with Mr Rassman who has serviced the organ since 1921. His comments and additional information given on the work done since 1921, and the repairs necessary to keep the organ in playing condition, definitely confirmed my opinion that to try and remodel the old sections would be a waste of money. The old parts cannot be used to any degree of satisfaction for the future, and it would be of no use whatever to try and use some old parts and some new. The present organ is so complicated in its divisions and although it looks a very large instrument from the specification (which is attached to this report) it is very small in actual numbers of pipes. The specification is made up of a great deal of duplication, borrowing, using a unit of pipes and dividing them among the three manuals and pedals. In other words one set of 85 pipes (which is a unit) is in the Swell Organ. This unit is divided up into three sections One section is borrowed on to the Great Organ as "Tuba" 16. 8. & 4. (Three separate stop tablets) Two other sections of the same unit are borrowed on to the Pedal Organ as "Tuba" 16. & 8 and one section is used in the Swell Organ As "Tuba" 8. This is just one example of borrowing and making use of a Unit. There are many others throughout the entire Organ which makes it even more difficult to try and

use the old chests on account of perhaps half a set of pipes being on one chest and half on another.

Whatever work is done on the organ should be followed through by the same builder. No builder is going to come in and try to match up with the work of another builder. This of course refers to all work in the Organ Chamber. The console is an independent section and could be hooked up to whatever work is done for the remainder of the Organ.

I would suggest the following builders whom I know would be reliable for the work needed.

Austin Organs Inc., Hartford, 1 Conn. (Makers of the present Console)
Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company, Boston, 25. Mass.
M.P.Moller Inc. Hagerstown. Md.

If it is the wish of the Vestry for me to go further with this matter I should be glad to write to the three Companies mentioned and ask them to send a representative to the Church (whom I would meet there) and go over the entire situation with him and prepare an estimate for the work necessary.

In closing this report I can only say that St. Mark's Church should have the finest organ that can be installed. Apart from my being asked to make this general report, I should like to add that I am very much personally interested in giving any help or advice that I can. I was so impressed with the spaciousness and beauty of the Church and hearing, in the Church what even the present Organ can do, that I came away with a feeling of "wanting to do" something to help in seeing a fine instrument completed in the near future, for a Church which is worthy of only the best.

Respectfully submitted by

Ernest Willoughby

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November 24th 1953

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FRANKFORD, PHILADELPHIA. PA
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SPECIFICATION of the ORGAN

ORIGINAL ORGAN ——— built by Charles Eugene Haskell, about 1908
WIND SUPPLY ——— then by Kinetic Blower Company

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NEW CONSOLE ——— By Austin Organ Company, Hartford Conn. installed by Rassman and Donnelly, Philadelphia. Pa. in 1940. Three Manual. Compass 61 note. Pedal 32 Note.

WIND SUPPLY ——— by "Orgoblo" built by The Spencer Turbine Co. Hartford. Conn. installed by Rassman & Donnelly in 1951

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SWELL ORGAN

Vox Humana	8	
Oboe	8	
Cornopean	8	
Tuba	8	Unit 85 pipes borrowed on to Great and Pedal Organ
Cornet	V ranks	
Violina	4	
Flute Harmonic	4	
Gedeckt	8	
Vox Celeste (Sharp)	8	
Salicional	8	
Open Diapason	8	
Bourdon	16	
Tremolo		

GREAT ORGAN

Tuba	4	)
Tuba	8	) borrowed from Swell Tuba
Tuba	16	)
Fifteenth	2	
Octave	4	
Dulciana	8	
Melodia	8	
Viol d' Gamba	8	borrowed from Pedal Violoncello on Pedal Chest
Philomela	8n	12 notes of this borrowed on to Pedal
First Diapason	8	
Second Diapason	8	
Open Diapason	16	extension of Second Diapason

CHOIR ORGAN

Clarinet	8	
Flute d'Amour	4	
Concert Flute	8	
Dolce	8	
Open Diapason	8	
Tremolo		

PEDAL ORGAN

Tuba	8	)
Tuba	16	) borrowed from Swell Tuba
Violoncello	8	borrowed on to Great Organ as Viol d' Gamba
Flute	8	extension of Philomela borrowed from Great Organ
Bourdon	16	
Second Diapason	16	extension of Philomela borrowed from Great Organ
First Diapason	16	

COUPLERS

Great to Pedal 8
Great to Pedal 4
Swell to Pedal 8
Swell to Pedal 4
Choir to Pedal 8
Choir to Pedal 4

Great to Great 16
Great to Great 4

Swell to Great 16
Swell to Great 8
Swell to Great 4

Choir to Great 16
Choir to Great 8
Choir to Great 4

Choir to Choir 16
Choir to Choir 4

Swell to Choir 16
Swell to Choir 8
Swell to Choir 4

THUMB PISTONS

Eleven Generals above Swell Manual
Eight Swell Pistons under Swell
Eight Great Pistons under Great
Five Choir Pistons under Choir

Cancel Bar to each Manual

General Cancel

TOE PISTONS

Great to Pedal Reversible } on right
Sforzando }

General Pistons 1. 2. 3. } on left
Pedal Pistons 1. 2. 3. }

Choir Expression Pedal

Swell Expression Pedal

Crescendo Pedal

Indicators for the above on right of Console above Swell manual.

NOTE :- When the original Organ was built the Pedal Chests only provided for a compass of 30 notes ← C C C to F. The new Console Pedal Board has a compass of 32 Notes C C C to G.

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WIND SUPPLY

This is provided by an "Orgoblo" built by Spencer Turbine Co. It is a 5 H.P. and supplies 2000 cubic feet P.M. at 4½ inch pressure and 200 cubic feet P.M. at 12 inch pressure. The present Organ requires 1710 cubic feet P.M. at 4½ pressure and 170 cubic feet P.M. at 12 inch pressure. The "Tuba" in the Swell Organ is the only set of pipes that requires the 12 inch wind pressure.

This blower of course can be used as it is, with possibly an auxiliary blower added if more wind pressure is needed when changes are made.